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Assistant Director for Research and Reports

Chief, Economic Research

Chief, Materials Division

Comments on Position Paper CFAF 576/1

1. In accordance with your request, the following comments are made on CFAF 576/1, U S Del/2, Annex 16, Project for a "Free the World From Hunger Year."

2. The United States delegation should be alert to possible communist propaganda uses of a "Free the World from Hunger Year". Current Bloc programs for economic development place great emphasis on increasing food production. These programs have been designed for maximum propaganda value. The reiterated theme is to "catch up" with the Western countries in the production of specified agricultural commodities in a very short time. The programs have been extensively publicized both within the Bloc and externally as important elements in the Bloc economic challenge to the West. It is conceivable that the Soviet Bloc might attempt to make maximum use of the proposed FAO project, for the purpose of proclaiming the virtues of the socialist-communist system, as opposed to "decadent capitalistic imperialism". The Soviet Bloc has apparently had a good crop year in 1956, and might make use of some of their increased production to make dramatic gestures of largesse.

3. The suggestions for research under United States Position (2) should be made precise enough to insure that studies prepared on the Soviet Bloc countries would be scholarly and objective. Statistics on agricultural matters are in some cases withheld by the Bloc countries, while in other cases the published statistics are unreliable. Consequently, these countries probably cannot be relied upon to provide objective and scholarly analysis of the subjects suggested. Any analysis undertaken on the Bloc countries should, therefore, not be done by the individual countries, but by some group whose technical qualifications and objectivity could be insured. Analysis of the agricultural situation in the Bloc countries, for the purposes of this program, should not be undertaken under FAO or UN auspices until the bloc countries furnish full and detailed statistics on all relevant matters, together with detailed methodologies used in making the estimates.

4. The United States delegation should be thoroughly briefed

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Subject: Comments on Position Paper CFEP 576/1

(1)

on the agricultural situation in the Soviet Bloc countries, and on the possible Soviet Bloc propaganda aspects of the proposed FAO program.

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